

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Enclosed are replacement sheets for Figs. 1 and 2, which replace the original sheets for Figs. 1 and 2.

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated August 22, 2007, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-87 were previously pending in the application. With this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80 have been amended; and claims 2-6, 8-16, 18-27, 35-37, 39-43, 45-63, 65-69, 71-79 and 81-87 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein. Accordingly, claims 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80 are presently pending in the application. No new matter has been introduced as a result of the amendments made to the claims.

In the Office Action, Figs. 1 and 2 have been objected to because of minor informalities. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that Figs. 1 and 2 fail to include a "Prior Art" legend. The Applicants have herein included replacement figures for Figs. 1 and 2 which include the "Prior Art" legends for the figures. Withdrawal of the objection to Figs. 1 and 2 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 8 and 87 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for lacking proper antecedent basis. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that the phrase "the post-processing" in claims 8 and 87 lacks proper antecedent basis. The Applicants have canceled claims 8 and 87 rendering the rejection to those claims moot. Withdrawal of the rejection to claims 8 and 87 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 6, 11, 33, 34, 43, 48, 69, 70, 79 and 80 have been objected to for being dependent on a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner also indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, the Applicants have rewritten claims 6, 11, 33, 34, 43, 48, 69, 70, 79 and 80 in independent form, as suggested by the Examiner.

In the Office Action, the Examiner made the following prior art rejections to the claims. Claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-15, 19, 21-27, 74-77, 38-42, 44-47, 49-52, 56, 58-63 and 82-86 have rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Kraft (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0141640,

"Kraft"). Claims 12, 16, 20, 49, 53 and 57 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of McNeil et al.(U.S. Patent No. 5,790,714 hereafter, "McNeil"). Claims 17 and 54 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Matama (U.S. Patent No. 6,603,886, hereafter "Matama").

Additionally, claims 18 and 55 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Matama, and further in view of McNeil. Claims 78 and 84 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Matama, and further in view of Grenier et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,079,698, hereafter "Grenier"). Claims 28 and 64 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin (U.S. Patent No. 5,585,841, hereafter "Hardin"); and Claims 29 and 65 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin, and further in view of Grenier.

Finally, claims 30-32 and 66-68 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin and Grenier, and further in view of McNeil. Claims 35 and 71 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin, and further in view of Hentschel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,239,772, hereafter "Hentschel"). Claims 36 and 72 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin and Hentschel, and further in view of Hsu (U.S. Patent No. 6,239,772). And, claims 37 and 73 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraft in view of Hardin, and further in view of Usami (U.S. Patent No. 5,696,840).

The Applicants have canceled claims 2-6, 8-16, 18-27, 35-37, 39-43, 45-63, 65-69, 71-79 and 81-87 rendering the prior art rejections to those claims moot. Additionally, claim 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80 have been rewritten to include, respectively, the allowable subject matter of claims 6, 11, 33, 34, 43, 48, 69, 70, 79 and 80 indicated by the Examiner (see Office Action, page 33).

Specifically, claim 1 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claims 2, 5 and 6; wherein claim 6 was indicated as allowable. Claim 7 has been rewritten in

independent form to include the limitations of claims 1, 10 and 11; wherein claim 11 has been indicated as allowable. Claim 17 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 79, wherein claim 79 has been indicated as allowable. And, claim 28 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 33, wherein claim 33 has been indicated as allowable.

Additionally, claim 34 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 28, wherein claim 34 has been indicated as allowable. Claim 38 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claims 39, 42 and 43; wherein claim 43 has been indicated as allowable. Claim 44 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claims 38, 47 and 48; wherein claim 48 has been indicated as allowable. Claim 64 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 69, wherein claim 69 has been indicated as allowable. Claim 70 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 64, wherein claim 70 has been indicated as allowable. And, claim 80 has been rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of claim 17, wherein claim 80 has been indicated as allowable.


Based on the foregoing, independent claims 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80 are not anticipated by the cited prior art. Additionally, no obvious combination or modification of the cited prior art would result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention recited in independent claims 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80. Therefore, claims 1, 7, 17, 28, 34, 38, 44, 64, 70 and 80 are patentably distinguished over the cited prior art.

In light of the discussion above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record, and in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the previous objection and rejections in the Office Action dated August 22, 2007 and pass the application to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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